

REMARKS

It is noted that in the current office action (Paper No. 6) mailed on 26 April 2000, applicant's preliminary amendment filed on 24 April 2000 is not considered. In that preliminary amendment, claims 1 through 7 were amended and claim 8 was newly added. On 28 April 2000, applicant immediately filed a petition requesting consideration of the aforesaid preliminary amendment, issuance of a supplemental first office action, and re-start of the period for response to the first office action. As of 26 July 2000, applicant's undersigned attorney has not received any response to that petition from the PTO.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter over the prior art in this application is appreciated.

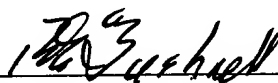
Claim objections

Claims 2-4 and 6 were objected to because of the informalities pointed out by the Examiner, and claims 4 and 7 were rejected under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112. These informalities have been corrected by the aforesaid amendment. The objection and rejection should therefore be withdrawn.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims of this application are now in condition for allowance, and early issuance thereof is solicited. Should any questions remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicant's attorney.

In view of prematurity of the issuance of the first Office action (Paper No. 6), no fee is incur by this Amendment.

Respectfully submitted,



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